



News From

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MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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COUNTY SUPPORTS FOURTH ANNUAL “RACING AGAINST DRUGS” ASSET BUILDING EVENT

Positive Youth Development promoted through the sport of racing.

Monroe County Executive Jack Doyle along with Prevention Partners, New York Senator Jim Alesi, New York State Police, Greater Rochester Soap Box Derby, the United Way of Greater Rochester, and Wegmans Food Markets, today announced the fourth annual “Racing Against Drugs” family open house event will be held at the Dome Arena, 2695 East Henrietta Road, on Wednesday, October 17, 2001 from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

This Positive Youth Development initiative will promote community asset building through the sport of racing. More than 100 cars will be on display from NASCAR, NHRA, IHRA, DIRT, and Rochester Street Rods. This year’s event will also feature a Soap Box Derby, Pine Wood Derby and DB Drag Racing as main attractions. A new Soap Box Derby car for the disabled will be introduced for the first time at the event.

“This racing event has been successful each year in bringing families and neighbors together,” said Doyle. “We know that the more positive influences our young people encounter, the less likely they are to engage in risky behavior such as alcohol and drug abuse. Encouraging family interaction and community involvement helps to build assets in our young people so they grow up competent, healthy and responsible.”

In addition to racing extravaganzas, the evening event will also feature various youth performances in areas such as music, dance, and gymnastics; as well as informational displays by asset partner groups, community organizations, and different police organizations.

This open house event is part of a three-day Racing Against Drugs program for local fifth graders at the Dome Arena. Tuesday, October 16, 2001 through Thursday, October 18, 2001, students from 19 different schools will participate in interactive learning on how to resist the dangers of drugs and alcohol and how to promote positive behavior amongst their peers. During these sessions, high school students will lead fifth grade classes in various brainstorming and team building exercises that will ultimately lead them to design a community service

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project to take back to their neighborhoods and help build assets in their peers. Each day the program will conclude with a mini-Soap Box Derby involving students from the classes.

This year, a Byrne Grant from Senator Jim Alesi has expanded the Racing Against Drugs educational program. The funds will provide mini-grants to each class participating in the program and support their individual asset building projects. It will also ensure project implementation, providing stipends to teen leaders who follow through with their class' planned activity.

"I am pleased to join with the other sponsors in securing funds to help pay for this valuable program," said New York State Senator Jim Alesi. "I am encouraged by the cooperative efforts of Prevention Partners and believe this level of investment in a positive asset building program will pay dividends for all involved."

Each class will consist of an average of 20-25 students and will devise their own unique community project. Students from the following schools will be participating: Corpus Christi, Crane Elementary, Holy Cross, Holy Rosary, Indian Landing, Leo Bernabi, New Covenant, Northstar Christian, Paul Road School, Sacred Heart, Schlegel Road, Scribner Road School, St. Andrew's, St. Bonaface, St. Charles Borromeo, St. John the Evangelist, St. Margaret Mary, St. Monica's, and St. Rita's.

"What makes Racing Against Drugs special is that students participate in their own peers' prevention. Students become the problem solvers," said Joseph Calabrese, executive director of Prevention Partners.

Assets are positive experiences and qualities that help youth make wise choices. The Search Institute in Minnesota has identified 40 assets that have a tremendous influence on young people's lives. Assets protect youth from engaging in destructive behaviors such as tobacco use, substance abuse and criminal activity, while also promoting positive behaviors that we all value, such as success in school and increased self-discipline.

New York State Police Investigator Dale D. Fair initially introduced Monroe County to Racing Against Drugs, a program adapted from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

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